

13 Gore Street, Sydney.
Melbourne 14 October 1878

My dear Andrew,

On this day 3 notable events occurred—
An unfortunate individual attained his 29th Summer; he
unexpectedly ascertained that the object of his steadily
increasing and unwavering affection was residing within
half an hour's journey, and lastly, but by no means least,
had half a minute ago perused a letter from one
of the best friends and one of the most earnest
minded men that a man could wish to possess.
I cannot sufficiently express my gratitude for your
thoughtful kindness and disinterested affection & for
this and many other reasons I shall always
recall this day with pardonable pride & joy
it however greatly tempered with sorrowful regret for
I cannot, for even one moment, conceal from myself that
for my true and indeed only course of action it is to
say that I do not think I ought to accept your
proposal. The reasons for such a course are numerous
but none the less cogent and I feel I ought to
preface them with a warning, a warning to you.
Dear Friend! you are too sanguine & too impetuous—
I have watched your career of ~~progress~~ progress with
an affectionate anxiety—nothing has escaped me &
the news I have to night read of your impending
Elevation is to me no surprise—But, Andrew, think well—
Are you premature; are you ready; what would be the
result of immature greatness? You know well that I am
one who always advocate & practice boldness of action &

I feel I am not writing 'vacant chaff' well
meant for grain' when I tell you that an instinct
(I cannot call it else) or instinct that, when the
welfare of my friends is the issue, has never misled
me, tells me counsel prudence, - age, even delay.
You have ~~me~~^{so} happy a mixture of native good
sense and of enthusiasm that I am sure you will
see the force of what I mention & I write the
opinion of more than one well worth "The Cause
" will never come again," you may reply but I am
sure you will admit on reflection that this is not
the case. I feel I am discharging a duty in
giving this friendly warning & admonition that you will
do what is right. I am so far removed
from the scene of action & the arena of the conflict
that I cannot go into minutiae or point out the
arguments that might be urged in favor of a
policy of delay but I am sure you give them your
earnest consideration I bear in mind the advice that
'onlookers see most of the same'. Of course there is
time for us to renew the subject and if you can
subvert my belief, who will be happier than I?

But Reason! so you offer my reasons, or
the principal of them, for thinking I ought to refuse
Are these? I'm sure you'll admit that since, I
am no longer young & although I devote myself with
passionate ardor to my profession it is because I have
lost all enthusiasm for aught else. I seek in it a
refuge from thought & care & only strive to drug
my memory. I am moody & miserable - I am unreasonable
I detest society & scarcely conceal contempt for those
I dislike or despise. How could such a man adopt
a policy of conciliation; how could he attract or retain

a chance? The result would be unsatisfactory
to both sides - But, in addition, I am desperately
in love & distracted with hopes & fears & it may be
long before the doubtful question is decided - I
cannot wear myself, even if I wished, away from the
enchanted spot and, oh dear Andrew, I feel so worn
& worn with the struggle, so tired of the per-
petual "riddle of the painful earth" that I feel I could
fall on some faithful breast & sobbing out my prayers
set up mine everlasting "Crisis" "Forgive these wild &
wandering airs" but I have much to endure &
it is very hard to suffer & be silent - Ah me,
let me return to prose - My third reason is that
even if the difficulties I have mentioned, which to
me are seemingly insuperable, the greatest has yet
to come & which ^{it is one} in the warmth of your affection
you have overlooked ^{It is this} I have by dint of at least
14 years incessant work got into a moderately good
position here. But at what a cost? I have
unlearned all my Tasmanian legal lore & acquired a
lecturer's stock in its place were I to accede to
your proposal & take a partnership what would be
the result - For 6 months at least I should be
practically useless & you must reflect that this is a
serious matter - Add to these reasons that I am
saturated with materialism, indifferent to the praises
of the world and you behold a model partner!
Putting it on this ground alone, ought you, in justice
to yourself & to those who are near & dear to you,
entrusted the future of your business, perhaps of your
life, to such an ~~individual~~ individual. Emphatically
no! But believe me I write in sorrow & with
a pure conscience; I have laid bare my heart to you
& I swear to you ~~know now~~ that I write unselfishly

I faithfully & I dismiss without thought or
comment the reference to pecuniary matters. Had I
received such a letter as this I would attributed
it to a bilious temperament or a disordered liver
but I have neither & at no time have I been
so worthy of your regard as I am now. I
answer your letter at once that you may discern
the emotions that agitate me & judge at leisure
what value there is to be attached to them.
Let me hear from you quickly & at length for
believe me I am not unwilling to be crowned.

I do not feel inclined - indeed it were
hardly proper, to enter on other topics now but
I must not omit my kind regards to Mrs Clark &
to William & Mary - you do not mention their
names but I am sure they are memories dear as
I of them & you may share them. This &c much
All you deem proper for from them I wish to have
no secrets - I am certain to be over at Christmas
& I hope I will find you in the mood in
which you last wrote.

I have written fast but the hour grows
late - The night is wild & stormy, the wind
whistles through the house, rattles & the heat is
intrude - and so my heart is wild, beloved &
aroused, struggling with conflicting emotions of love
pride, vanity, despair.

But, bah. My stomach must be out of
order. Good night. God bless you!
Your affectionate friend
H. S. Gill

A. J. Clark Esq